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FM AMEMBASSY NICOSIA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8758
INFO RUEHZL/EUROPEAN POLITICAL COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE
RUEHAM/AMEMBASSY AMMAN IMMEDIATE 0446
RUEHLB/AMEMBASSY BEIRUT IMMEDIATE 4301
RUEHDM/AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS IMMEDIATE 2109
RUEHTV/AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE 6439
RUEHEG/AMEMBASSY CAIRO IMMEDIATE 0265
RUEHJM/AMCONSUL JERUSALEM IMMEDIATE 1919
RHMFISS/TSA HQ WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE
RHEHAAA/WHITE HOUSE WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE 1126
RHEFNSC/NSC WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RUEHBS/USEU BRUSSELS IMMEDIATE
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 NICOSIA 000293

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR D, P, M, DS, S/CT, CA, EUR, A, IO, S/ES, DS/CC

E.O. 12958: DECL: 05/09/2018

TAGS: [ASEC](#) [CASC](#) [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [CY](#) [LE](#) [TU](#)

SUBJECT: EMBASSY NICOSIA HOLDS SECOND EAC ON LEBANON CRISIS

REF: NICOSIA 00292

Classified By: Jane B. Zimmerman, DCM, Reasons 1.4 (c), (d)

11. (C) Summary: At 1630 hrs local on May 9, Ambassador Schlicher held an Emergency Action Committee (EAC) meeting to assess the latest developments concerning the Beirut crisis and review progress on Embassy Nicosia contingency planning. The meeting was a follow-up to the initial EAC meeting conducted at 1000 hrs local time (reftel). During the course of the meeting, it was reiterated that in this tight budget climate, funding from Washington would be essential in order to successfully support Beirut. In the event of a non-combatant evacuation operation (NEO), the EAC team reviewed staging and housing options for any departing Americans, and identified both maritime and air transport (commercial and military) options. IPC confirmed that the communications systems are being tested. Team members confirmed that coordination with the Cypriot government (including the Police and MFA), the international community, and regional counterparts is occurring on several levels. The Ambassador pointed out that competition for resources with other countries' departing nationals is a possibility. End Summary.

Funding and Staffing Issues

12. (C) Given the current Embassy Nicosia budget constraints and LES staffing shortfalls, Management (MGMT) flagged funding and staffing issues for the EAC and declared that funding from Washington would be necessary for additional support for Lebanon. The Regional Security Officer (RSO) highlighted a possible need for Transportation Security Administration (TSA) support at Larnaca airport. Consular (CONS) also stated that, based on experience garnered from the previous NEO, local staff advised that consular operations would require additional staff as well. CONS stated that it had reviewed its contingency plans, including the possible temporary suspension of normal consular operations except in emergency cases.

Facilities and Transport

13. (C) The Open Source Center (OSC) noted that its facility

could serve as an alternate facility for TDYers or serve as a safehaven for Embassy Beirut staff. The Economics (ECON) and General Services Officer (GSO) staff stated that they were identifying possible areas to house departing Americans, including possibly hotels and wedding halls, and conducted a review and identification of shipping assets. The Defense Attache Office (DAO) reviewed possible air and maritime transportation assets to be mobilized in the region, and noted that Paphos International Airport is under heavy renovation and reconstruction.

Communications

14. (C) IPC confirmed that it has a radio network that is tested, working and can handle encryption. IPC can provide limited SBU communication offsite, and is preparing to expand our communications capabilities. A test of Post's emergency Short Messaging Service (SMS) system will be conducted over the weekend of May 11-12, and IPC is preparing a collective group e-mail specifically for contingency planning for the Lebanon crisis, which will be functional by May 10.

Reaching Out

14. (C) The Front Office has spoken with the Cypriot MFA and the British High Commissioner. The RSO has reached out to counterparts in Beirut and the region, European Command (EUCOM) and Diplomatic Security (DS), and informed the EAC that the Cypriot Police are now on heightened alert and appear to be taking the possibility of a NEO quite seriously.

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DAO has coordinated with European Command (EUCOM), and other section heads are coordinating with local contacts, counterparts, and Washington.
SCHLICHER